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UNDEVELOPED TO WOMEN
ENGAGED IN DOMESTIC WORK

HENRY C. POTTER

**ADDRESSES TO WOMEN
ENGAGED IN CHURCH WORK**

**BY THE
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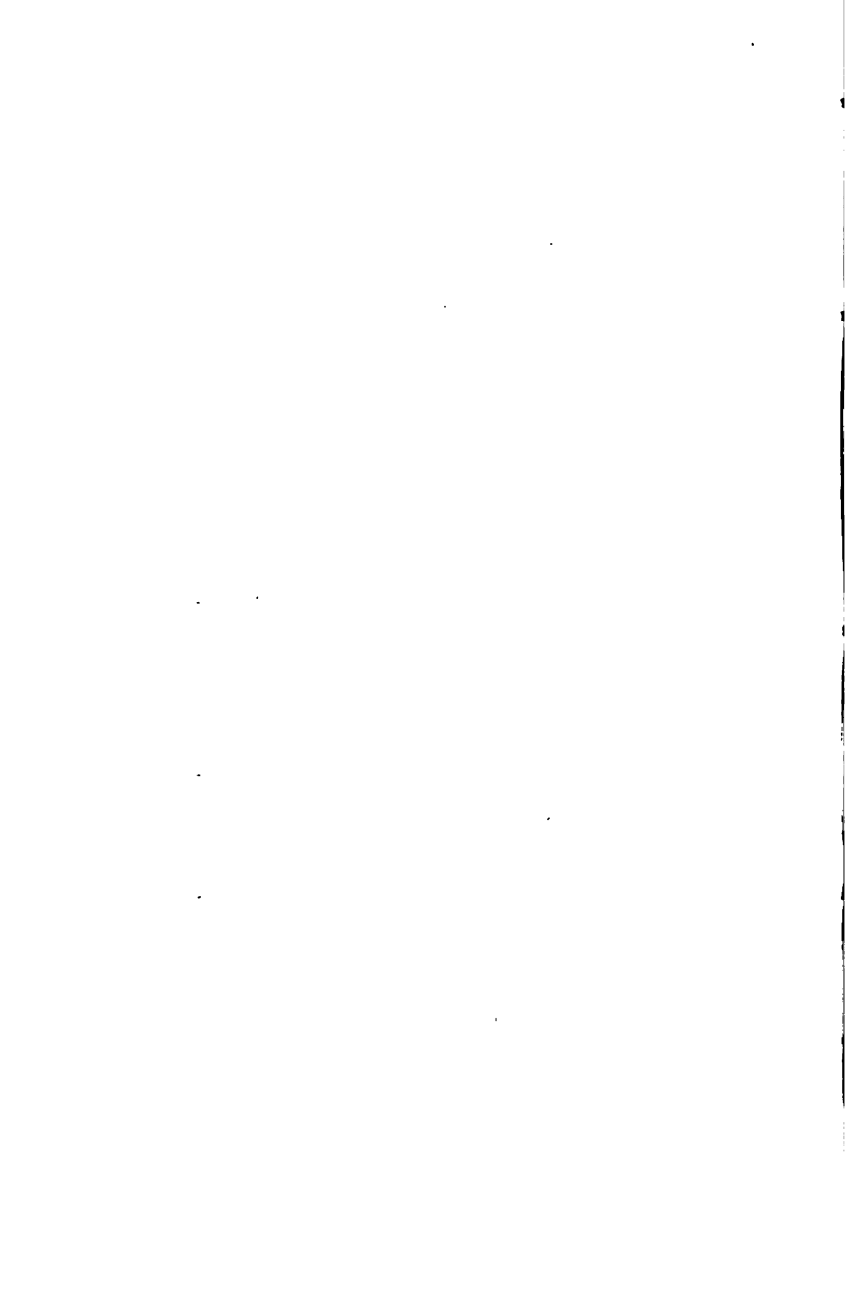
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE GREAT EXEMPLAR . . .	3
THE REALM OF ORDER . . .	27
ENDS AND INSTRUMENTS . . .	67
ILLUSIONS AND IDEALS . . .	95
WHOLENESS	123



INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE Addresses which follow need, rather than an introduction, an apology. Of their crudeness and imperfection no one can be half so sensible as he who now sees them in the cold light of print. Prepared amid the pressure of large and anxious tasks, away from books, and without leisure for reflection; wholly unwritten, save as to a few brief heads, and delivered, usually, without a single note, they have been taken down by a short-hand reporter, and appear here with all their original defects of form and diffusiveness of style. I wish I could believe that the judgment of others, who have

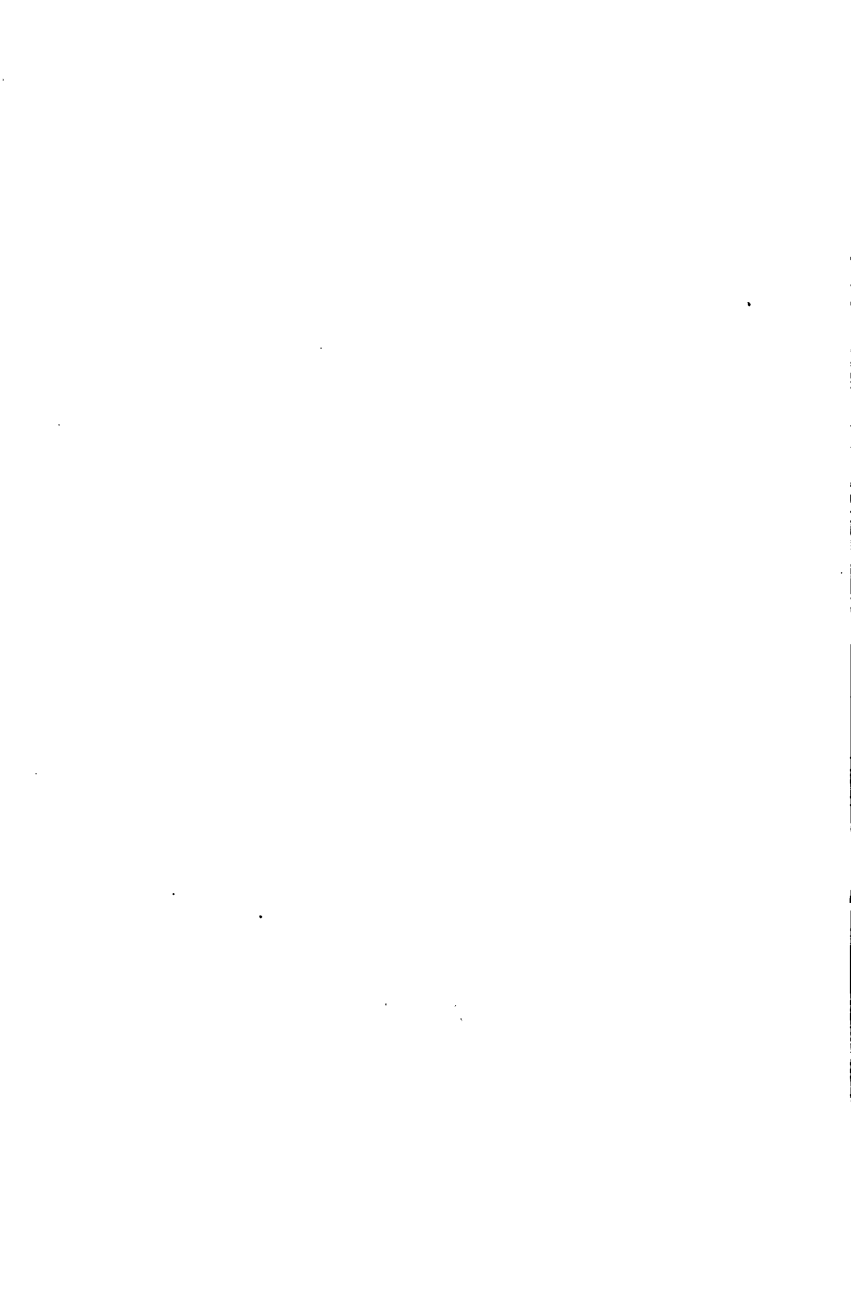
asked for them in this more permanent form, were not more friendly than critical, and I can only pray that, if they shall be found to contain a single helpful suggestion, it may be accepted as at least partially excusing the temerity of their publication.

HENRY C. POTTER.

Lent, 1887.

THE GREAT EXEMPLAR.

An Address delivered in Grace Church, New York, on Tuesday, November 27, 1883, at the Service for Women engaged in Church work.



THE GREAT EXEMPLAR.

IT is a matter of heartfelt thankfulness to me that I am permitted to meet you here to-day. We shall be stronger, I am sure, for our common tasks—for in a very real sense yours and mine are one—for looking into one another's faces, and recognizing that closest bond which binds us together in service to our common Lord. Such a gathering as this helps us to make our communion of service a more real and inspiring fact, and to remind us that, however far apart may lie our various fields of work, the work is one, and the workers one, in the motive and the Master that inspire them.

Our communion of service, I say, and that it is a communion of *service* that associates us we may not venture to forget. There is a line of reflection which would seem, at the first view, to be that which, most of all, is appropriate to this occasion. In our various relations to those societies, guilds, sisterhoods, and the like, which are represented here, we are much engrossed of necessity in the tasks to be done and the ends to be accomplished. In each of these there is much detail, much that is of the nature of earthly business, much that is concerned with material means and resources. And, busy about these—absorbed with questions of finance or charitable house-keeping, buying clothing, or packing a box for a missionary, dressing a wound, dispensing an alms, or washing some poor

waif of the garret or the street into something like outer whiteness, if no more, it may be said that we are easily tempted to forget the higher ends of all Christian work, to forget that "the life is more than meat and the body than raiment"—to forget that our service itself is, or should be, a nurture of our own souls in the life of prayer and faith, and saintly speech and thoughts, and instead, like her whom her Lord gently but distinctly admonished, to be "cumbered with much serving."

Believe me, I do not forget it. That other side of a Christian life which is not work but worship, not activity but stillness and upward-looking expectation, not contact with men but communion with God, we are all in danger of neglecting. Even the highest and most sacred functions (none knows it

6 THE GREAT EXEMPLAR.

better than he who addresses you) may be in danger of becoming a mechanical and task-work routine, and if any one of us is to be saved from that perfunctory and secular temper which sees in our service only an engagement to be kept, so much piece-work to be finished when it is called for, it must be by coming back, from time to time, into those upper airs where the soul may hearken and be still.

But while this peril is to be distinctly recognized, there is another as real and often more dangerous, because less easily discovered. History has been written in vain, if it has not taught us that nothing is easier than to antagonize the life of devotion and the life of service, and to exalt the former as more sacred and more needful than the latter. That legend of the kneeling monk in his cell,

to whom, as he prays, there comes a vision of his Lord flashing out upon the bare, white wall of his chamber, and looking down upon him with ineffable tenderness and benignity, was written for all time. He is kneeling, you will recollect, and gazing upon the vision with wrapt devotion, when the harsh clang of the bell at the monastery-gate breaks upon his ears. He knows well enough what it means. A stranger, belated, needy, and importunate, is knocking for admission. Shall he go and let him in, or stay? Shall he miss the vision, or the service? And while he hesitates the bell rings again, and regretfully remembering his vow not to be heedless of the cry of any poor man, he hastens to obey its summons, renders the needed service, and returns sadly to his cell. The vision, he is

sure, will be ended, and the Gracious Presence gone. But no ; it shines down upon him in fuller, nearer beauty, and as he looks he hears a voice, " If thou hadst staid, I had fled."

The parable is of eternal application. The Church has had in all ages the quietist as well as the busy-body, the pietist and the mystic as well as the philanthropist and the secularist. How many sermons have we heard about the sisters, Mary and Martha—sermons which, with all their eloquence, missed the point of their story, and misread the words of their Lord. For it was not that Martha toiled that her Master rebuked her, but that she toiled at the wrong time and for a wrong end. Who knows at what tasks Mary had wrought early and effectively, that when the Guest came, she might be free for that

truer hospitality which consists not in fussiness, but in companionship? Nay, who does not know that hers was the truer serving which waited upon her Lord?

“ Ye servants of the Lord,
Each in your office wait,
Observant of His heavenly word,
And watchful at His gate.

* * * * *

“ Watch, 't is your Lord's command,
And while we speak He 's near ;
Mark the first signal of His hand,
And ready, all appear.”

So runs the Ember hymn, and we may not miss its meaning. Service and devotion are not the antagonists of each other. Rightly viewed they are parts of one symmetrical whole, a life in which the one interpenetrates the other, and in which the hearkening ear and the watchful eye are sometimes as true a service, as real a work for God and

our fellow-men, as the busiest task and the most exhausting labors. A student of nature is strolling through a field, and the laborer who watches him idly passing by, sighs in envy of his indolent and easy life. But in truth that observant eye, those trained powers of discrimination and discovery, are taking in the minutest details of his surroundings, and deducing from them principles which, in their application, shall make the laborer's task lighter, and all the world richer. A commander is moving to and fro, absorbed and silent, upon his quarter-deck; and the man at the mast-head looks down upon him with a vexing sense of the contrast between his own hard and exposed life and that other which seems so much easier. But we know which of the two is even then the more laborious, which brain and

eye and ear are on the keener and more constant tension ; in one word, who is the toiler at once the more constant and the more indefatigable.

And all this is of value only as it leads us into the presence of the Great Exemplar. What was the story of the earthly ministry of Christ ? There is a little volume by a non-conformist divine of England,¹ called "A Day with Christ." I wish we might all read it. It is simply the story of a single day's work by the Worker of Nazareth, as told in the Gospels, and it is safe to assume that it is a specimen of the greater part of His brief and crowded ministry. I may not rehearse it here, but I may remind you how few, after all, were the pauses in that ministry. Undoubtedly Christ had His moments of stillness. But if

¹ The Rev. Samuel Cox.

the story of the Gospels is to be believed, how brief they were! How He hastens, unrestingly, from town to town! How no privacy of friend's house, or entertainer's guest-table protects Him from the sinners and sufferers who throng to touch and hear Him! And yet, shot through and through was all this service with the silver thread of a Divine calmness and peace. His tasks never flurry Him, His work never masters Him, His engagements never enslave Him. On the most urgent errands, He yet turns aside and interrupts them. In the most tragic moments (think of the servant of the High Priest whose ear Peter cut off) He stops to heal and restore!

Now, when we look at such a life as this, we find ourselves asking, "What was its supreme spring and spell?" If

you will turn to the fifth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and look at the 17th verse, I think you will find it. Says Jesus: "*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*" Hold these words in your thoughts for a few moments, and, meantime, go along with me in the next step of our meditation.

We sometimes think of the work of Christ in the world as if, in its human experiences, it was somehow wholly different from our own. But it was not. What are our commonest experiences in our work—commonest and most disheartening?

(a) Weariness, I think you will agree with me, is one of them. With vigorous powers, and light heart, and facile hand, service is a challenge which we gladly and almost exultantly accept. But the day comes—perhaps, with

some of us it has never been absent—when the brain is dull, and the hands tired, and the nerves jarred, and sore, and shrinking. And then we say: “There was One who could say, ‘My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me’; but if He could say that, how different He must have been from me! My spirit is willing, but oh, my flesh is very weak—yes, and weary. Could He ever have known anything like this?” Listen, my sister.

“And He must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh He to a city . . . called Sychar. . . . Now, Jacob’s well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.” Did you ever think of the force of that little word “thus”? Being wearied, He sat “*thus*.” How vivid and masterly the touch that,

in this way, lets us see the whole scene !
Jesus was wearied, and He showed it.
He sat thus—that is, as one who is
wearied, with the droop of fatigue, and
the languor of exhaustion, on the well.
Tired ? Ah ! yes. He knew what it
was to be tired, and to find the frail
instrument falter before its mighty tasks.
Your experience is not unlike His.
Into the valley of that humiliation, if it
be a humiliation, He has gone before
you !

(b) Again : another experience common to all of us in work for Christ is that discouragement outside of ourselves, which we find in the stubbornness of that with which our work is concerned. Who shall estimate the enthusiasms dampened, the lofty purposes abandoned, the large and noble plans left unfulfilled, because, when we addressed

ourselves to our task, we found circumstances so unyielding, the hearts of men so obdurate, the sympathies of Christian disciples so cold and irresponsive, the leaders in Israel, even, to whom we had so confidently turned, indifferent or suspicious? There are those here this morning—I know it, though they have never told me so—who have said to themselves, “What was the good of it all? my sacrifices, my prayers, my plans? I had an opportunity; I gladly owned the call that came to me in some providential opening; I was willing to spend and be spent for Christ. And what did I meet? From those to whom I went, in my Master’s name, and with His message, a chilling and repellent welcome, or worse still, a sneer and a gibe. From those who were rich in this world’s goods, a dole or a refusal. From my

fellow-servants in the same household of Faith, a prophecy of my failure, or a jest at my fanaticism. I have been willing to work for Christ, but I have found neither welcome nor help, and I am simply discouraged, and what is worse, half faithless of good or of any triumph of the Truth."

There is no exaggeration, I believe, in such a picture as that ; and yet its shadows are not half so dark as those of that age of the world to which Christ came. It is the pre-eminent distinction of His ministry that the Church and the priesthood, the scholars and the cultivated, the wealthy and the eminent, each one of them, as a class, opposed to Him a blank, dead wall of stubborn indifference. It was not that they could not understand Him ; they did not want to. "Ye will not believe

My word," this was what He said of them, and He spoke that which He knew. The obstacle to His welcome was in the will—obstinate, antagonistic, unbelieving. And yet, in the end, He triumphed. There came a day when they who had mocked Him yielded, and when "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." There came a day when the Cross conquered pride, when love melted resistance, when the truth took captive the soul.

My sisters, you are working with the same Cross as your symbol, and with the same truth as your inheritance. Hold them up with hands nerved by faith, and with hearts on fire with love, and God will give you your hire!

(c) Once more, and as illustrative of other experiences common, I imagine,

to all of us, there is that discouragement which comes to us not from opposition, nor yet from weariness, but from those who are our fellow-workers. You have a purpose, lofty and helpful, as you are persuaded, and those who are associated with you cannot see its merit. It is not that they are indifferent—you know that they are not ; it is not that they distrust you—you are sure of their regard ; but their eyes are holden that they cannot see. Some film of prejudice, or, oftener still, some intellectual incapacity to understand you (one of the hardest things, I think, to bear), makes it simply impossible for them to follow your thought or to enter into it. It is not hostility, it is simple dulness. Or, again, it may be that they do comprehend you, but they are honestly at issue with you. "Far be it

from Thee, Lord," says St. Peter, when his Master foretells His death. The Apostle knew what his Lord proposed, and he honestly doubted its expediency. And to the companionship of such men Christ was doomed, as we should say, during His whole earthly ministry. It would be simple trifling with the facts to pretend that they understood Him, even at the Last Supper, or that they were not honestly at issue with Him as to the expediency of His purpose.

And yet, He waited—and wrought. The work did not cease because His fellow-workers could not comprehend it. Toiling and suffering, dying and rising again, He who said "I must work, the night cometh," went on in that work till the end, that glorious end, when it came to be with all, as at

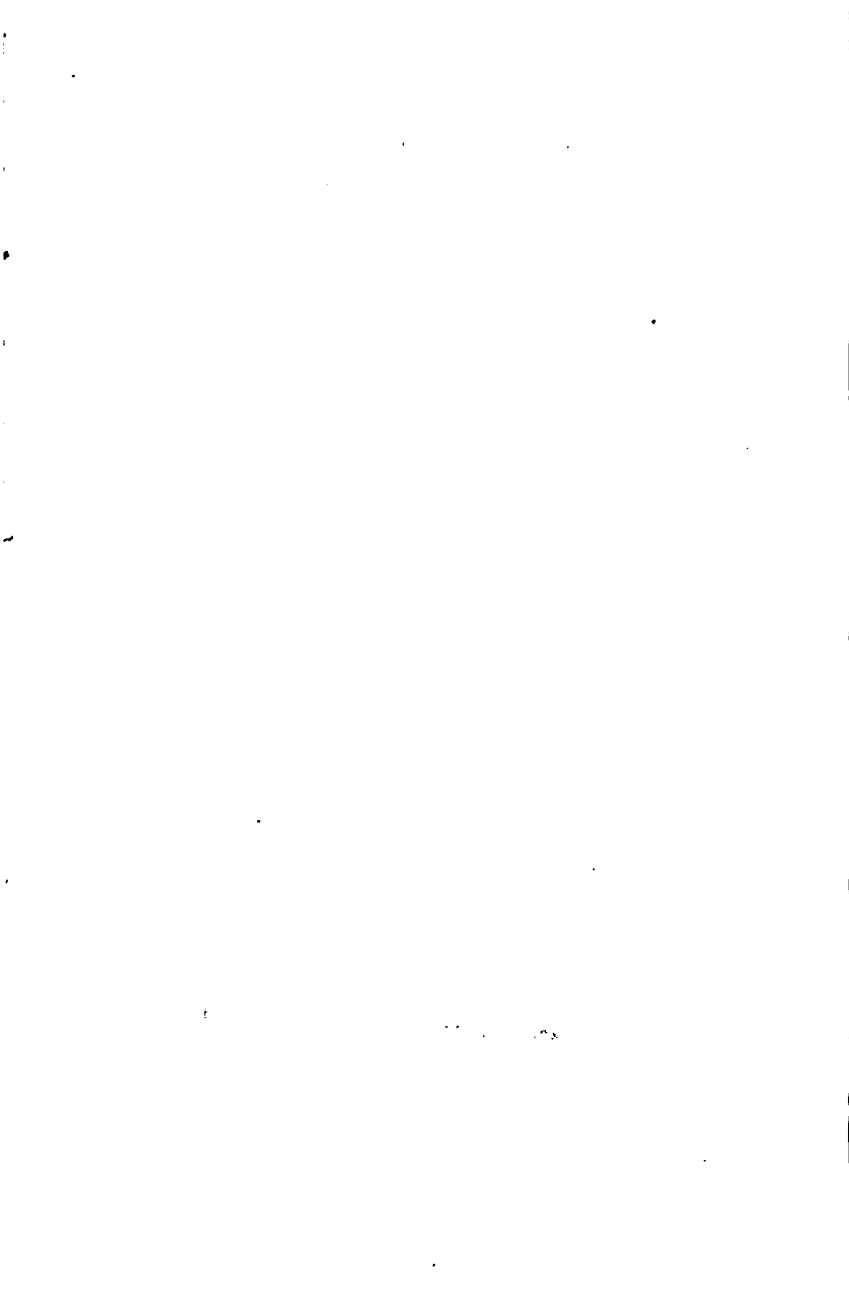
first it was with two of them, that "their eyes were opened and they knew Him"! Kneel down, then, O discouraged one, and when even your nearest and dearest in the Lord cannot comprehend you, trace His lonely footsteps in the way, and strive yourself to walk in them.

But how? In such a life there was some mighty and sustaining power. What was it, and how can we make it ours? To that question we have, I believe, the answer in those words which I have quoted in St. John's Gospel: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Sit down and read the words of Christ in the four Gospels, and see how full they are of the sense of God—God working in nature ("Behold the lilies," "He maketh His sun to rise," "He sendeth rain," etc.); in events, as

He turns back for Israel the half-forgotten page of Hebrew history and traces through its tangled skein the golden thread of a providential ordering; and finally, in Himself, as when He says "I and my Father are one"; "The work that I do, I do in My Father's Name"; "The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth." In the ministry of Christ there is an all-pervading consciousness of a Divine partnership, and, flowing out of it, a calm and serene confidence that He who was working in and with Him, would bring Him, let what might delay or hinder, to the hour when, His task complete, His toil all done and ended, He could say "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

That was His secret. It must be

ours; and it may be. One with Him in the fellowship of the Father, confident with his confidence who had caught so truly the spirit of his Lord that he could say "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," and with that other who wrote "We then as workers together with Him, beseech you," we too may not fear to say "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." His lamp shines through my reason. His compassion stirs my pity. His courage nerves my will. My task, my work, do I call it? Nay, it is His more than it is mine. He and He only can make me know the meaning of the words: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," and He has given me "an Example that I should follow His steps."



THE REALM OF ORDER.

An address delivered in St. Ann's Church, New York, on Monday, February 1, 1886, at the Service for Women engaged in Church work.

THE REALM OF ORDER.

I AM to speak to you this morning, in accordance with the notice already given to you, of the Realm of Order; and in reference to the large subject which that phrase suggests to us, we may well remind ourselves at the outset, how we who live in the world of to-day, and who call ourselves Christian people, are a part of those two great realms or kingdoms, each one of which has so much to do with our happiness and welfare.

We are a part, first of all, of the Realm or Kingdom of Nature. The eye with which I look into your faces at this moment, the ear with which you hear

my voice, the feet which have brought you hither, the brain which has followed these services so far—all these are a part of the great realm, the first stone of which was laid when “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” And when, after a long rest, that creation was followed by those successive fiats or commands, which called light and the lower forms of vegetation and animal life into being, and which crowned the whole with the existence and the powers and the sovereignty of man, this was the inauguration of the Realm of Order.

Believe, if you choose—for I think that a larger study will adequately reconcile the two seemingly opposite views of the subject—that these successive steps of creation were accomplished, in some sort or other, by a

progress or development of life from lower forms into higher: nevertheless, the meaning of what we know as nature to us here to-day is one and the same. Once there was chaos, darkness, seething forces which had not been called into organized life, and had not been placed in fixed relation to other forces; and then, as we should say, one day, there came a Voice. He who is Himself a God, as the Apostle names Him, "not of confusion," but of order and of "peace," because of order in all the ages, spoke at last, and this chaos vanished, and the darkness disappeared, that in the place of it there might appear that thing which we know as the Realm of Order.

Think, for one moment, of one single feature of that realm, as illustrative of the whole. Think of the law that parts

day from night, and makes the succession of darkness and light. Suppose, if so impossible a thing were supposable, that, instead of the recurrence of daylight and darkness, in accordance with a law of fixed and sure succession, by which you can tell just as accurately when the sun will rise a year from to-day, as to-morrow—you and I were left to the uncertainties of a vagrant daylight and a vagrant darkness; a life in which day and night alternated irregularly, spasmodically, without a law, and without any premonition or foreknowledge on our part. Think what it would be to undertake to order your daily life, to minister in the things in which ministry is meted to you, if, first of all, you could not place your hand upon a law of order in the realm of nature, and say, " This thing

will be, because it has been, and on this fixed and orderly succession, on this due and harmonious proportion, of day and of night, I may count in the work that I have to do in the world."

What now was proclaimed on the first morning when the sun dawned for the first time on the world, and when chaos vanished to give place to order and to those great laws of nature and of life of which you and I are a part? This: that the world was to be the home of a creature who was to find in it a Realm of Order.

And again; what was proclaimed, when, centuries afterwards, another kingdom came into being as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ? One day, a far-off land is roused from its lethargy by a cry. There is a voice heard in

the wilderness ; there is a solitary man, a single personality, lifting up a protest against the sins, the lethargy, the darkness, the subterfuges of the time. And that is all at first ; because in the world of humanity the first thing is not organized society, but the individual ; first of all, that separate and sacred personality which in the eye of God is the image of His own being, and the likeness of Himself. And so, first of all, there is John the Baptist ; not a church ; not a society ; not a community or fellowship of any sort ; but one man, setting himself against the drift of his time, kindling other men into life and light and fire, by the power with which he speaks. And this is a perfect illustration—the ministry of this man John the Baptist—of what we may call at once the power and

the weakness of individualism in the world.

For, following the ministry of John the Baptist, we find that, when the Apostles came on one occasion to Ephesus, there were those who had been baptized with the baptism of John, and who had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Ghost. They had been set on fire by a new truth, and then they had wandered apparently out of the influence of that which followed the preaching of John the Baptist; they had not been brought into the associations of the Church of Christ; they had not been baptized in the Name of its Divine Founder, and they were outside the means of grace, and therefore necessarily largely outside the hope of salvation.

But after John the Baptist there

comes Another, who from first to last reveals Himself as the Prophet, Teacher, Founder, and Ordainer of order. He speaks of a Kingdom, of His disciples as the children of a King. Little by little, taking up that interest and curiosity and alarm which had been awakened by His predecessor, He lifts it to a higher level, to something more than curiosity, or interest, or alarm, to that which we name discipleship ; and when He has gathered about Him a little band of men infused with His own spirit and converted to His own convictions, what does He do but send these men out to baptize in the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And thus was organized a Divine Society, to create in the world a brotherhood which should be ruled according to the principles of a divine order, and to lay

the broad foundations of that great fellowship or Kingdom which we name to-day as the Church of God.

Now, when you come to read the letters which the men whom Christ sent out to preach His Gospel wrote to the Churches which they founded, nothing is more significant than to see how instantly, and therefore all the more suggestively, this thought of orderliness, of setting things in order, of Christianity itself as a divine order in the world, comes into view. When the Apostle who had founded the Church in Corinth is writing in that first letter of his to that Church, concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; after he had rebuked those who had converted the Supper into an occasion of revelry and festivity, what is that injunction with which he concludes ?

"And if any man hunger, let him eat at home: that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I *set in order* when I come."¹

Again, when he sends out the men who were to preside over the infant Church he himself had planted, and to build up the handful of believers into something more than a little vagrant band in the waste of paganism, what is the charge he lays upon them? Listen to the words that he writes to that Apostle whom he sends to preside over the churches in Crete:

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest *set in order* the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."²

In other words, the new religion was

¹ 1 Cor. xi., 34.

² Titus i., 5.

not merely a new enthusiasm ; the new truth was not merely a new philosophy ; the new Teacher not merely a new teacher, but a King, even as in the face of Pontius Pilate He owned.¹ He had come, not to leave an orphan Church in the world ; He had come to found a Divine Kingdom ; and the very essence of a kingdom, whether it be human or divine, is that it shall be founded upon principles of order, and upbuilt upon laws which are fixed and determined from the beginning.

Surely, a moment's reflection will persuade us that that which was so necessary in the beginning, is no less necessary, nay, far more necessary, to-day. For, what is the difference between that condition of society to which the Christian religion came, and

¹ St. John xviii., 37.

the condition of society as you and I know it to-day? On one thing I think we will all be agreed, and that is, that life is enormously fuller now than then. The various agencies which have opened the mind of man to contact with other men, the various scientific discoveries, like steam, and electricity, and printing, have somehow multiplied life, so that the points of contact and relation with our fellow-men have been increased almost indefinitely.

But what are the consequences of such a condition of things? The voices that speak to us, the claims that address themselves to us, the appeals that reach our sympathy, must needs be no less multiplied, and so they are. What most torments people, with sympathies and aptitudes for doing service for Christ in His Church to-day, is the

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very multiplicity of the claims upon their time, and attention, and emotions. How constantly our ears are tried with the voices that come to us saying, "Come over and help *us*"—those cries of sorrow or want, that rise up around us on every hand! And therefore it is, that if we are to do the work of Christ, without wasting our forces and throwing away our strength and frittering our energies in the doing of it, we must, first of all, recognize the inevitable necessity of being subject to the Realm of Order.

What, now, are the conditions of that realm?

I. The first which I would name is *Discrimination*. This is a condition which lies at the threshold of any true fealty to the Realm of Order. In the matter of Christian work, the first ques-

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tion, in other words, for you, for me, to decide, is this: There are some things which are worth doing, and there are some things which are not worth doing. There are a great many other things, it may be, which are worth doing, if we were sure of absolute leisure, if we had no home ties or other claims upon our attention, and if our obligations were so isolated that we could draw a sharp line around them and ignore everything outside of them; but that is impossible. And so, the first condition of service for one who would serve God is, that he or she shall recognize that there are certain things which have a superior claim, and which must be done with the clear understanding that, in order to do them, other things, which call perhaps with more clamorous voices, must be let alone.

Again: we must recognize, in accordance with this principle of discrimination as the first condition of the Realm of Order, that there are some things, which by our training and station we are fitted to do, and others which we are not fitted to do. How often it comes to pass, that we set our hand to some task or service, just because it has a sentimental side! Or, again, how often is it that we yield to the importunities of a friend to associate ourselves in some enterprise, of which, if we were honestly to analyze it, we should find that that friend is himself or herself a largest part. Take that element out, and the thing does not honestly appeal to our intelligence, our judgment or our sympathies. The first duty under such conditions is to separate the work which comes to you

with an appeal for co-operation or sympathy, from the mere personal element, which, in this life of ours, is often the most potent element in warping and perverting our judgments. What we want to know about any work is, first of all, whether it is relatively worth doing; secondly, whether it is a work which we can best do; and, thirdly, whether it is the work, which being the work which we can best do and being relatively worth doing, of all other work, to-day, comes to us with most direct and strenuous call.

Bring this principle of discrimination into your life, and how, straightway, confusion, and torment, and unrest will disappear out of it! You know how it is in the home, where one gets up in the morning with a thousand petty cares appealing to her, and where there

is not that calm judgment and deliberation first of all in the closet, as to the tasks of the day, which clears the air, and so steadies one with the sense of the supreme importance of things which are fundamental, and with the secondary importance of things not fundamental. Who of us does not know from bitter experience, how, pulled hither and thither by conflicting thoughts, tormented all the day long by questions that we strive to answer and cannot, when the day is done, we sit down and fold our hands in the consciousness that it has been from the beginning to the end a failure, simply because in the beginning of it there was not a reference to and a reverence for this law of the Realm of Order, nor any wise discrimination as to the claims of relative duties.

There is a very striking illustration of what I mean, in the sixth chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, when the infant Church, having grown out of its earlier feebleness, had come to have what it has to-day in such large measure, those dependent upon its eleemosynary care, needing the ministration of its alms. "In those days," we read, "when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."¹ The issue, as were all others, was taken to the Apostles. Now, the first instinctive line of action, for one who had not recognized this principle of discrimination in the ordering of his daily life, would have been for these Apostles

¹ Acts vi.

to have gone down into the midst of this business of ministration and undertaken to correct the unfairness on the one hand, and the neglect on the other, in regard to the matter of the ministration of alms to the widows of Grecians and Hebrews, by personal intervention.

But with that inspired wisdom, which not only laid the foundation of the Church, but raised it out of its elementary crudeness, the Apostle declares of those who were ordained to preach the Gospel, and to lay the foundations of the Church, that "it was not reason they should leave the Word of God and serve tables." Serving tables is not an unworthy work for us of the Ministry. If one comes to our door, it is not beneath our dignity to feed him. But there are other forces and powers in the Church which can do this precisely

as well as we can do it; and if so, we are to recognize that there is such a thing as a law of discrimination; that that which is greater is not to be neglected for that which is less; that the concerns of the spiritual life are not to be overlooked for concerns of the temporal; that the activities of the Church of God—often a danger in our days—are not to engross themselves with mere matters of outward ministry, so that they forget to dispense that godly counsel and those saving truths which are to be the primary powers in turning men from darkness to light.

II. Again, there is a second condition of the Realm of Order—I mean, *Subordination*. The moment that we look at the infant Church, we find that in it there were what we call different orders of men. There were those who were

Apostles ; there were those who were indiscriminately the first Elders or Bishops, those who were Presbyters, and those, like these of whom we read in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, who were Deacons, and, as some of us believe, those also who were Deaconesses. In other words, no sooner does the Church develop an order, than it develops a subordination in orders. And this law of subordination, which from the beginning the world has been trying to get rid of, it resents, it breaks out of, it throws over the wall, only surely and inevitably to bring it back again. We who are here are members of a society, and parts of a state, which calls itself a Republic : a protest we say, against those monarchical forms of government, with their investment of almost absolute power in the sovereign, which ex-

isted in less enlightened days. But it is doubtful whether any sovereign in Europe has as much absolute power, especially in connection with the appointment of subordinates, as is vested, at this very moment, in the President of the United States. In other words, we may call the form of government what we will, sooner or later it comes to this, that there must be some ultimate dispenser of authority, some ultimate voice that shall give the word of command, in matters of duty and service, in every company, little or great.

I am sensible that here I am speaking of a matter of great difficulty and delicacy. How easy submission to rule would be, if authority were always exercised with wisdom, meekness, and love! To yield to a sounder judgment,

when its decisions are made plain to us in kindly ways, and without harshness or arbitrariness of tone, is not ordinarily hard. But when authority is exercised imperiously or dictatorially, to yield to it is sometimes almost impossible, even if, as under such circumstances we are tempted to believe, it is not actually wrong. And it is here that there often arises, therefore, one of the severest trials to temper and character, in such work as most of you are doing. It must needs be done, if it is to be done at all, in subordination to rule and authority, and at this point you in this church to-day, who are, whether as parishioners in a parish, or members of a religious society, or associated in some parochial fellowship, working under the general oversight and direction of some one over you in the Lord, must be aware

of the difficulty of which I speak. God forbid that I should forget the fact, that those who are over us in the Church are men of like passions with ourselves, of abundant infirmities of judgment; easily intoxicated, it may be, now and then, with authority; self-willed sometimes, inconsiderate, not always wise nor thoughtful of others' feelings. But, in the case of men set over women, this is but to suggest the question, *How can we expect that men shall always be sufficiently thoughtful of the sensitiveness of women, when they are not women themselves?* No doubt, oftener than otherwise, *men* are impatient of suggestion, impatient of counsel or advice, even from those older and wiser than themselves, especially of women, just because it seems to them to derogate from their official authority.

If my brother clergy were present I might speak of this matter with more frankness. Meantime, let us remember that this is a part of the inevitable friction of that condition of infirmity and sin in which the Church finds itself to-day. It is not greatly different, after all, with women or men. In the little parochial society, as every one of you knows, there are jealousies, because those at the head of the circle of workers are there, sometimes, for some very secondary consideration of wealth or influence, or of mere seniority in service. Now, we do not always name ourselves, or our own claims, in such a connection, but perhaps we say that another working beside us is so much better able to take the helm and steer the little ship, and set in array the battle, than she to whom the task has

actually been entrusted. And then, when we are conscious in our work that this other set over us is not always considerate of our judgment or patient of our suggestion, that the briefer and the smaller the authority—alas, that it is so often so!—the more strenuously it is asserted and the more imperiously shown—then I am bound to confess that acquiescence, submission, for the sake of bringing order out of confusion, is sometimes an extremely difficult thing to render.

And yet it belongs to us to remember that there can be no service without submission, and that, however ignorant, self-willed or inconsiderate those may be who are over us in any work, it is possible for us, at any rate, to lift them up into a nobler capacity for their service of rulership, by two things: first of all,

by the loyalty with which we acquiesce in an authority which has been rightly ordained ; and secondly, by the frank, unreserved candor with which we speak in love those thoughts of criticism or dissent, which, just because they are not told out into the ears of those they are meant for, rankle and fester, until at last they breed that bitterness out of which comes the failure of the whole enterprise.

How different it would have been if at this or that point in some heated controversy, when we differed from one whose duty it was to conduct the work we did in common, we had first of all recognized the eternal righteousness, in a world and realm of order, of the principle of subordination, and then had striven to render our service as loyally to the constituted authority as we

54 THE REALM OF ORDER.

could ; and *then*, when we could not go further, had spoken to the other in frankness and in tenderness and love, instead of speaking of him behind his back, in bitterness and resentment and impatience ; for, just as truly as the Realm of Order involves, first of all, *discrimination*, just so truly it involves also *subordination*.

III. And then the other and final condition of the Realm of Order, which after all is of supremest consequence, is *Inspiration*. A very striking book, "Christianity in Nature," which is one of the most suggestive disclosures of the witness to the religion of Jesus Christ which may be found in the world of nature that has been written in our own generation, uses, if I recollect aright, this illustration :

The writer draws the picture of a

stream running through the forest, beside which there stands one day an explorer, who determines to build a mill. What is it that he must do in order that the mill which he builds shall grind his grain and do the work for which he has built it? This: He must set his mill-wheel in the stream and current of the on-rushing tide, so that the law of gravitation which drives the stream onward in its course shall turn the wheel which his ingenuity has devised, with least waste of power and largest economy of his natural resources. In other words, unless he places himself *in line* with those divine increments of power which God has bound up in nature, he may build his machinery of costliest material and direct his mill with utmost skill, and he will have done both in vain.

And so it is in our work for Christ in His Church or in the world. It is supremely necessary for us to recognize that God is a God of order, that so we may put ourselves into position—we who are Christian workers—for His divine inspiration: adjusting our task, our whole order of life, our hours of service and rest, so that through them all there may flow that ever-quickenings and ever-moving current of a divine life, which alone turns deadness into power and weakness into strength. Before us, as we sit here to-day, there is this altar of the Living God to which presently we are to draw near, for the strengthening of His Holy Sacrament. Ah, my sisters, when the indwelling power of that divine life does its work in us, what will be our service, our courage, our conquests! First and

last, then, we are to recognize that submission to the Realm of Order means expectancy and waiting upon the Divine power, dependence on those treasures of grace which are stored in the everlasting storehouse of God.

One word, in conclusion, as to what will be the sure fruits of this submission to the Realm of Order. First of all, we may count upon *rest* and *peace*. The difference between a life lived in accordance with the Realm of Order and one which is not, is the difference between anarchy and sovereignty, the difference between self-control and self-torment, between strength and weakness. *Get your life into a divine order.* Get it into affiliation with, and submission to, principles of eternal law. Get it into dependence upon the divine strength ; and then what a new thing,

when you rise in the morning, the day will be !

And next to *rest* and *peace* will come *strength*. Here is a heap of stones dumped down into the street. Imagine each stone instinct with life, and having it in its power to fling itself, in some wild way, into some other aggregate of atoms than that in which it finds itself. And then, imagine, on the other hand, that, conscious of the sovereignty in the world of the rule and Realm of Order, each one of these atoms takes itself and places itself upon certain lines, and upbuilds each one upon the other, step by step, in accordance with the eternal laws of construction, and you have instead a wall which shall stand the storms of centuries, and defy the hand of the strongest enemy.

Just so it is, when we come to take

our life out of the condition of chaos and bring it within the domain of the Realm of Order. When once you take your work, whether in the parochial society, or sisterhood, or in the street, out of the realm of confusion and bring it into the Realm of Order, with set time, with a recognition of things that are primary and secondary, with a reverence for a due subordination, then you have become straightway, not an element of confusion in the world, but a tower of strength, and men will look up to you, and lean on you, because they see in you that columnar quality which is the fruit of obedience to law.

And then, finally, the last result of this submission to the Realm of Order is the great and blessed assurance that our work will have in it continuity and perpetuity. Ah! how many people

there are in the world—of how many of us here it may be true to-day—that with our aims wedded to some true and precious cause, to which we have given our strength and means and time—the fact that plagues us all the time is this: What will become of it when I am gone? who will take it up and care for it and carry it on then? I am but a waif, and the great world rushes on and wipes out the mightiest and humblest alike with its inevitable flow. What will be the fate of this little effort of mine, this striving for God and some poor child of His, in the end?

I wish I could read to you just here the story of a young girl in England, who, moved by what she saw drink had done in a barrack town on the south coast, went alone into the places where there were soldiers and sailors, following

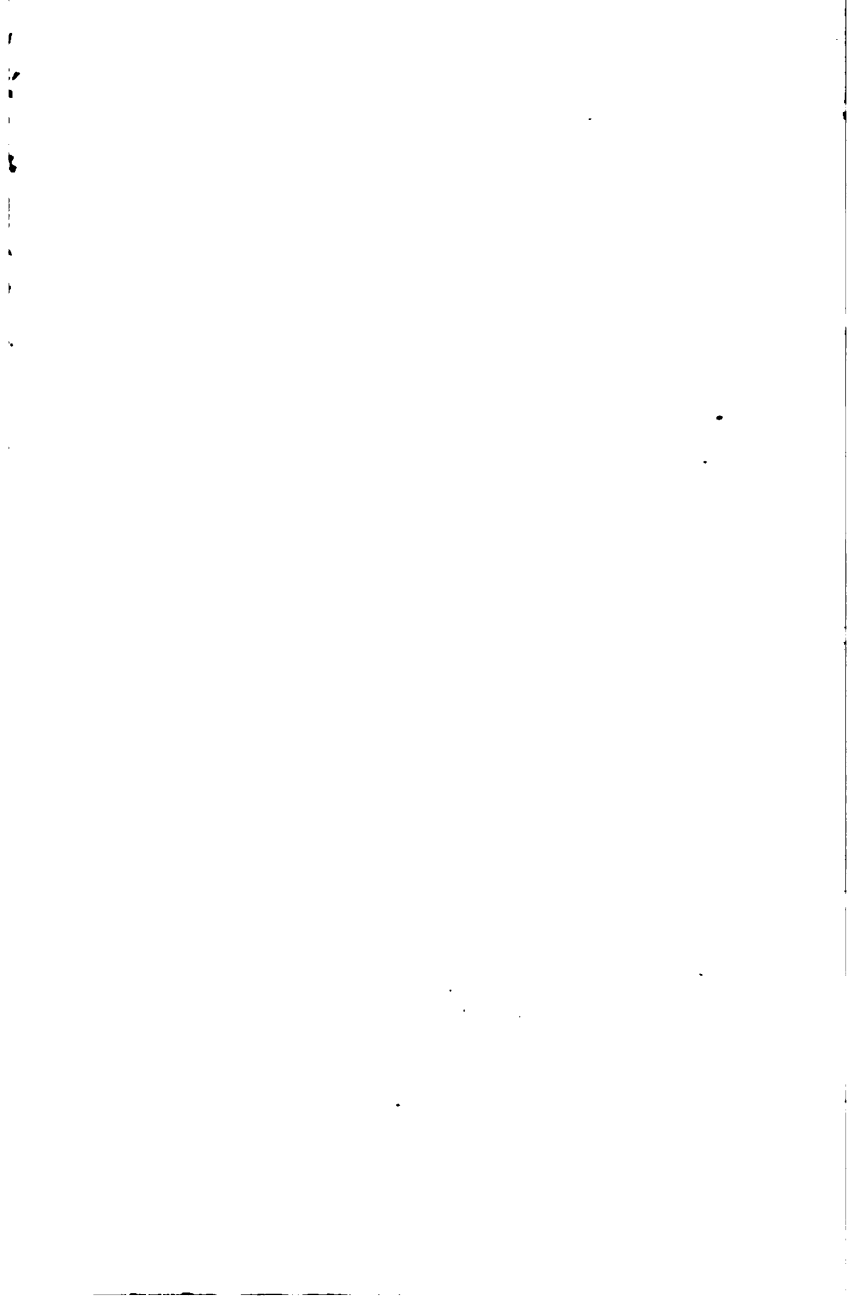
them sometimes into the lowest haunts, following them with a persistence, a tenderness and a patience, that would take no denial, and waiting for recognition through long years, until, slowly, out of her single-handed effort, lo ! it came. Just because, from first to last, having, all the while, a plan of her own, she was ready, as she said, at any moment to lose herself in some larger plan for the work, that larger plan came and took her, and through her created one of the mightiest agencies for the reform of intemperance that is to be found in the Christian world to-day.

It was because of the faith of such a woman as Sarah Robinson, holding on to the conviction that her effort was a part of God's own divine plan, holding on also to a clear and definite line of duty, until at last she was able to lose

herself in a larger plan—it was because of this that her name has become immortal in the history of Christian service in our time; even as it was this which at first won a way into the hearts of those to whom she went and for whom she strove.

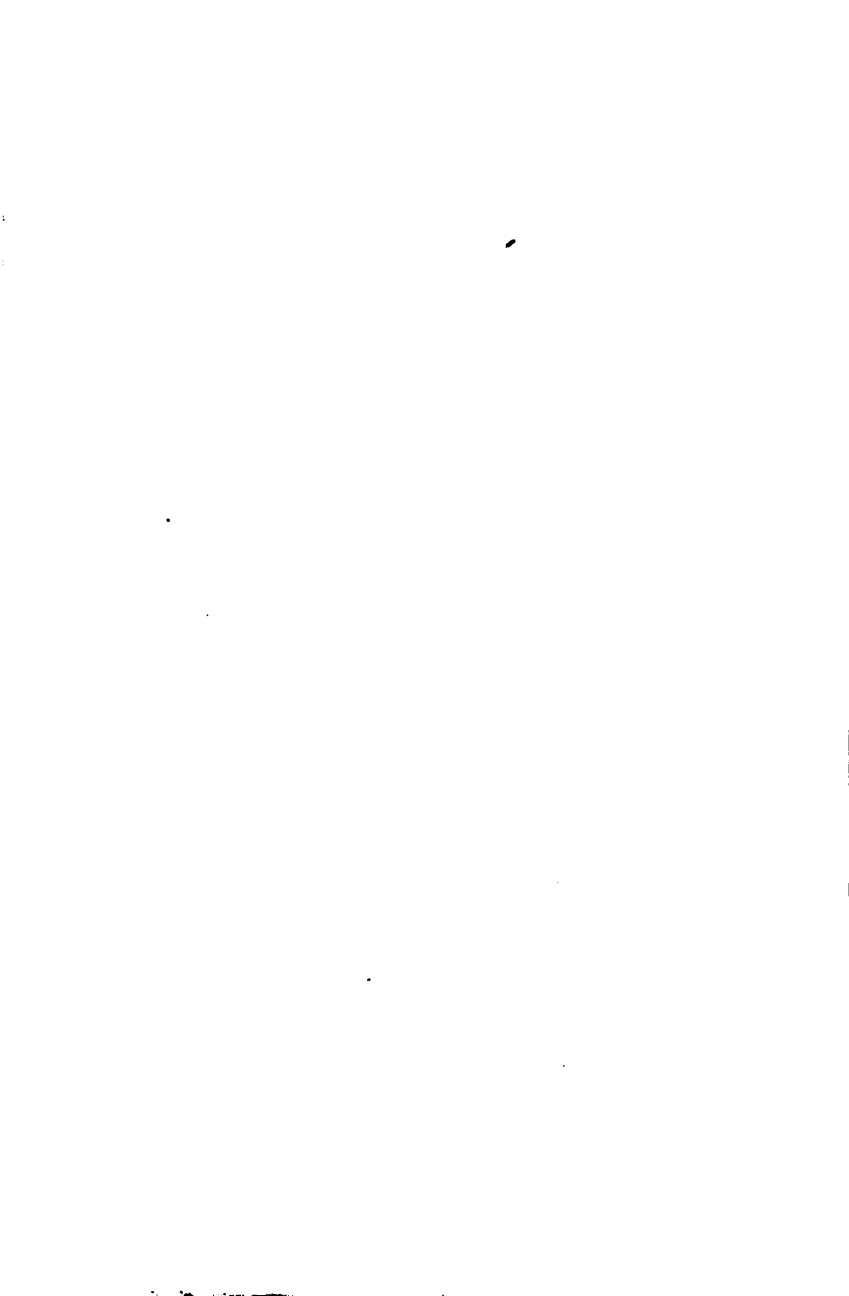
So with you and me, whatever the task may be, and however small and unknown. If we begin it with a wise discrimination, continue it with a wise subordination, and above all, if we begin and continue and end it with a supreme reference to a divine inspiration, it will not fail. Somewhere, some other heart will kindle into a flame for the sake of those for whom we labor, and our labors, long after we are gone, will endure because we have begun and continued and ended them in obedience to the laws of the Realm of Order.

God's we are, God's we shall be in the world to come. His is the Kingdom which is to triumph over all confusion. To redeem it from that confusion, His Son has come into the world. Let us draw near to Him, and, yielding up our life to His control, have every lawless and unordered thought and aim made subject to His Will!



ENDS AND INSTRUMENTS.

An Address delivered in the Church du Saint Esprit, New York, Monday, February 15, 1886, at the Service for Women engaged in Church work.



ENDS AND INSTRUMENTS.

OUR theme to-day is Ends and Instruments, and in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Prophet Isaiah there is a single verse which, as expressively as any other in the two Testaments, opens the whole subject for our discussion. That chapter, as perhaps you will recollect, is a part of the prophecy with which Isaiah is bidden to prepare the mind of Israel for that greater destiny which awaited it. In an age of national decadence, and in a time when a large part of its people were in captivity, God speaking to His Prophet, reveals to him that other and nobler future which awaited His chosen nation, when

led out of bondage they should know a perfect liberty, and when all the way along they should be conscious that behind them there was a Divine purpose, moulding and controlling events. And in pursuance of that thought, these words are put into the mouth of the Prophet: "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work," by which, undoubtedly, God designs to remind those to whom He speaks through His prophet, of two truths, equally pertinent and helpful to us who are here to-day.

One of these is that general truth of His own sovereignty. Man is God's instrument. He acts under a Divine guidance and inspiration, even when, like Cyrus, the pagan king, he is not conscious of it, and this he himself illus-

trates by those constructive powers of his, with which in turn he forges the instruments, which, like the smith's, are used for his daily work.

Now if you have ever seen a forge fire, you have seen one of those things which, with the least interesting aspect externally, become attractive, even instructive, the moment that you recognize the processes which are going on there. If one were blowing the bellows and hammering a mass of iron, turning it to and fro with his hand as he did so, without an aim or object, the whole spectacle would be equally meaningless and grotesque. But as you watch the smith, you see the great mass of molten metal which he handles at the end of his tongs, under those successive blows of the hammer which he deals, assume, little by little, a definite shape. It may be a

plowshare that he is moulding, or a pruning-hook; an instrument of peace, or an instrument of war. The thing that is significant is, that the crude metal is slowly becoming some sort of an instrument. The expenditure of labor is not for labor's sake alone. Beyond the labor there is an end. In the eye and mind of the laborer, every step, every blow, is directed to a definite result; and nothing is more interesting than to watch the way in which, out of the most hopeless and apparently obstinate mass of crude material, skill will sooner or later educe a tool which shall do the tasks of the world and subdue the obstinacy of Nature.

But go a step further. Have you ever thought of that other tool—which has so much to do with the fashioning of the tool itself? What is it that enables

the smith to shape either the pruning-hook or the plowshare? You say it is the thought which conceives those images in his brain, and the will which resolves to put them into execution. But a thought is an unborn child, and like any other unborn child, may never see the light. That which enables it to live is the act by which the thought is translated into some visible expression, and therefore behind the thought of the smith there must be the hand of the smith. He who worketh in the coals cannot think out and excogitate and will into being the plowshare or the pruning-hook; there must be that other tool, that most marvellous of all instruments, I think, which we call the human hand. Was there ever in all the world, a tool, an instrument, like that? We say that it cannot see, but in the case of

those who are without sight how truly it becomes "eyes to the blind"! We say that it cannot speak, and yet a gesture will be sometimes infinitely more expressive than a word; an averted hand will tell as much or more than the averted face and the most resentful speech.

And then, think of the ministries of the human hand, as they apply themselves to sorrow and suffering. We go into the darkened chamber of some friend, to whom, if we could, we would speak a word of comfort in a great sorrow, and the most we can do, and often the best, is by the silent, constant pressure of the hand, to give expression to a sympathy which words only blunder in telling, and which we convey far more expressively just because we tell it without words. Again: here is a

wound ; how shall it be healed ? With medicine, you say. Yes, but what—as day by day we are being taught so wonderfully in this day of trained skill—what is there in the whole realm of material relief, so effective to bear upon pain and misery and bodily suffering, as the ministry of a human hand ? Watch a trained nurse bandage a limb, and then watch a philosopher attempt the same task. This deft instrument, this marvellous weapon, sensitive, strong, delicate, nimble, is of all other marvels in the world, it seems to me, in the way of instruments, the most marvellous.

And what is it that makes it so ? Plainly, its adaptedness to its tasks. Think how tender it can be ! Consider how, in those processes of engraving which are the finest and most delicate, and which have to do with the manu-

facturing of money or its equivalent—there is developed in the palm of the hand a sensitiveness so fine in the treatment of a steel or copper plate, that no agency which the wit of man has invented, has ever been able to take the place of that primitive touch. Think again, how the hand is adapted for tasks at once grave and delicate; how it can hold or push or pull, with what gentleness it can touch a wound, and minister to a diseased body, almost as imperceptibly as the very breath of the air. What is it, all the way along, I ask you, that impresses us in this marvellous, this incomparable tool? It is its adaptedness to the tasks which in this world God has given it to do.

And that reminds us of that painful disagreement, that want of harmony between ends and instruments which,

in other and higher tools than those of the hand, is one of the most trying and disheartening experiences of life. We look at the work which we are doing ourselves, we look at the work other men and women are trying to do for Christ, and we recognize, very often, the most cordial purpose, the most honest consecration of gifts and talents, and as the end of them all, the most dismal failure. What is the explanation of the failure? It is often simply that, unlike the human hand, the instrument has undertaken a task for which it was not adapted.

(a) This may come in many ways. In the first place, from want of native aptitude, a want, which, in taking up our particular work in life, whether it be a secular or a spiritual calling, is a matter far too little regarded. In the

child that grows up under the shadow of our own teaching, there are qualities that differentiate him from any other. Here is the boy at your knee, whom you would fain see great at the bar or in matter of science. Here is the girl to whom you look, when she grows to womanhood, to lift off a little those domestic cares that have fretted you all through her childhood, and which you have borne patiently, thinking that one day they were to be divided with another. And she grows up with an exquisite sense of color, a singular genius for music, or for rendering some humane service to other people, but without the least adaptedness for those tasks which to you seem the most important. And the boy whom you would fain have to love books and the paths of high emprise, finds his interest,

it may be, in a piece of mechanism, develops tastes utterly alien to those which you yourself have, or that belong to any ancestor whom you can recall ; and then such an one has his life spoiled, perhaps, just because you insist upon coercing his native want of aptitude in a channel for which it was not ordained.

To us who are here to-day, this question of aptitude is one which ought to lie at the very beginning of any Christian work whatever. Our own native powers are a part of the endowment which God has given us for serving Him in the world. So far as we refuse to understand them, just in that degree, we shall be sure to go astray in any service that we undertake to do for Him.

(*b*) And then, next to that mistake, there is the other and far commoner

one which we make, in undertaking any work given us to do, in spite of our want of training for it. Take the illustration which I have already used—of one who undertakes to dress a wound, or to minister to one who is in physical pain, without the education of the hand and the eye, which are the indispensable requisites for every such ministry. I might bring the brightest man in the world to sit beside the bedside of one stricken down with some sore disease, and if he did not understand the relation of some simple remedy to the case before him, his wisdom and theoretical knowledge would only be an embarrassment in his ministration. Discipline, education, that is, training, is the one element often which distinguishes failure from success.

(c) Again, still another explanation

of so much of the failure that we find in life and in our own work, in this matter of ends and instruments, is our habit often of over-taxing an instrument adapted for a certain work and abundantly well trained for it. What is more painful, when we look out on the daily life of a city like this, than to see so many people—yes, and as we go through the streets, so many brute beasts—on whom are laid burdens larger than they can bear; whose are gifts, training, taste and predilection, but who are overweighed in the work they have to do, with a task so much too large for them, that failure in it is fore-ordained before they begin.

Now, such facts as these, in connection with that subject which we are considering here, of the adaptedness of instruments to those ends which they

undertake to achieve, suggest to us the question, how are we to correct and avoid these specific evils and errors to which I have alluded?

I. In the first place—and it is a matter of sincere thankfulness that more and more in our age that fact is being recognized—we are to correct the disproportion, the mal-adjustment of instruments to ends, by a knowledge of our own gifts and aptitudes and character. What is wanted at the threshold of any task which involves persistent service, and looks forward to effectual results, is that you and I should, first of all, understand ourselves: what it is in the way of native aptitude that God has given us, and so, having taken account of ourselves, should understand the native resources at our command.

II. And next to that, and no less

important, is the matter of training. Here, again, we have much to be thankful for in that classification of work which is more and more a characteristic of our day. This is an age of specialists, and if the work of the world is to be done, it must be by means of special endeavors. In other words, in the Christian service that we do for the ignorant, the relief of poverty, the arresting of vice, the saving of the fallen—in all these tasks that in our day have grown so large, to do them effectively, there must be in every case somebody who is willing, first of all, to learn how to do them, and who by training has learned the deftness and the skill which are the indispensable prerequisites of success.

Some of you here this morning have had an experience in Sunday-school

work. I wonder if any young girl, or any woman no longer a girl, looking back to such a time, can forget the first time when she sat down and confronted a Sunday-school class? That sense of overwhelming helplessness that came upon her as she realized that she was set there in the office of a *teacher*, and with the responsibility of not misleading minds in the understanding of the truth—how keen it was! With the Word of God in her hand, she was to unfold its meaning to those that came there to learn at her mouth the way of the Lord. But how? With what previous training? I think we are bound to confess, especially we who are ministers of Christ, that oftener than otherwise, in the incompetency, the inadequacy, the utter unfitness, that exist in such cases on the part of the instrument, the

responsibility belongs not so much to the young, unfledged, inexperienced teacher, as to those who, over her in the Lord, have set her to a task for which she is so poorly trained. *Teaching*—is it a natural gift? to make clear to another the way of eternal life—is that a sort of thing which you can take up and put down, as you would take up a task in needle-work? And so of anything else we are called to do for Christ, even though it be so humble as a task in needle-work—the very first condition on which we ought to insist with reference to ourselves, or any others set to do Christ's work in His Church and for His children, is that there shall go before it some sort of preparation. And therefore, when we are asked to undertake such work, it would be a wise precaution if we demanded of those who

asked us, "How do you propose to enable me to do this work effectually? Give me some sort of preliminary teaching and instruction which will fit me to do it to edification ; give me a school in which I can learn thus to serve Christ, and then I may be able to say that I will consent to do so."

And here I want to call the attention of those to whom I speak, whose work may lie among the poor, to the great opportunities afforded them of educating a body of helpers to reinforce them in their work, by taking along with them, for a time, those who are willing to serve Christ in this way, but who are held back because of inexperience. When we open the New Testament and learn the way in which the greatest tasks of all were attempted by the men to whom they were assigned, nothing

is more significant than that on all the occasions of which we read, the first workers for Christ went forth two and two. The work of laying the foundation of the Church, the preaching of the Gospel, were done not singly, but, as a rule, with one more experienced and one less experienced worker, working and moving side by side. Believe me, if we could establish that simple rule in the work we are trying to do, instead of isolating our endeavors so much as we do, the result would greatly inspire and surprise us.

III. And then, finally, we are to recognize the fact in this matter of adjustment of instruments to ends, that a most wholesome discipline in the education of any one of us, for any task which Christ calls us to do, *is not so much success as failure.* "Happy are

the people," is a Hindoo proverb, "Happy are the people who began by failing." And it is a proverb of enduring truthfulness. As I stand here, there comes back to me the memory of a great thinker, whose services to the Christian religion we may well remember, as we acknowledge the hospitality of this pastor and flock of French lineage, and whose name and work we may well honor, as placing us and our children and our children's children under enduring obligations. Who of you here this morning has not read the story of Blaise Pascal and the Port Royalists, that marvellous man, who, coming out of comparative obscurity, made the whole Church of Rome to tremble at the courage with which he challenged its errors, and who, in his Provincial Letters, has left a literature which, I

venture to predict, will endure as long as the graceful and versatile and fervid tongue in which he wrote it? But do you know that Blaise Pascal, the philosopher, the Christian teacher, the reformer of an age, and almost of a Church, began his work as a boy of eighteen in a mechanic's shop, where he spent week after week and month after month in vain endeavors to manufacture a calculating machine, the model of which was the germ out of which came that other and still more marvellous mechanism which we know as the calculating machine of Mr. Babbage?

Now, then, when Pascal set himself to that task, he made not merely the one model, or two, or a dozen, but fifty. He made them in steel, he made them in brass, he made them in ebony, he made them in ivory. Baffled and de-

88 ENDS AND INSTRUMENTS.

feated at one time, he turned back to the very beginning, and went over the whole complicated business again and again and again. And though the instrument, which at last he completed, never received the recognition on the part of the scientific world which he himself expected, thus dooming him to another disappointment, he was himself, by that supreme discipline, that persistent and resolute endeavor, educated to be an instrument in the hand of God of almost incalculable service to future generations. For, out of that baffled endeavor, out of successive failures, stumbling and falling and beaten back, but refusing to be conquered, there came the spirit of resolute courage, which, when he had to face a hostile time and to challenge a hostile Church, gave him the clear insight, the resolute

purpose, the almost divine persistency, which has made his name in the realm of Christian thought immortal.

And this, my dear friends, lifts us to a higher and still larger view of the whole subject. You and I want to fit ourselves, in this matter of Christian service, to be instruments that shall accomplish an end. We want to know our native gifts, we want to cultivate them by a wise training, we want to be willing to humble and to discipline them into strength, by failure. Yes, but all the time, from the beginning to the end, we want to bear in mind this great, this precious and inspiring truth, that we ourselves are, after all, but instruments, and that the end of our work is not in our hands, but in God's. There is a little book called "The Problem of the Poor," in which you will find

the story of Elspeth, a German servant, who, living on the east side of this city, and doing first a work of delegated philanthropy for an invalid lady, took up, after her mistress had died, the work which at first she had done as proxy for another, and broadened and widened it until it became a blessing to the whole neighborhood. Get the book, and read the story called "One Woman's Work," and see how, dominating that humble but helpful life, there was this mightiest secret of service and motor of action, the consciousness that this humble instrument was a tool in the hand of God.

You and I will go presently to the most comfortable and helpful Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. And for what? For this, that first of all we may put ourselves anew in the

hands of One whose instruments we are. Let us be willing to lie still as His tools, in the Hand that is mightier than the human hand. And let us remember, too, for that is the unspeakable consolation, which, as a door turning on golden hinges, opens to us the fairest and most blessed vision of all, that if, here and to-day, the end and the instrument have been but poorly mated, if the best of us must feel, as who of us does not sometimes, how poorly matched he is with his task, and how too large are the burdens which he bears—for each there is coming a life and a service, when the instrument and the end shall be perfectly mated, and when, in the presence and under the inspiration of a Divine Strength, the tasks, which, as we try to do them here, seem too discouraging, will come

92 ENDS AND INSTRUMENTS.

to us with a new and gracious invitation, just because, there, in the better service, in the Perfect Presence, in the fellowship of a close and constant contact with our Almighty Friend and Helper, we shall see our work with perfect vision, and touch, all the while, the Hand that gives us the courage and the strength to do it.

ILLUSIONS AND IDEALS.

An Address delivered in the Church of the Ascension, New York, on Monday, March 1, 1886, at the Service for Women engaged in Church work.

ILLUSIONS AND IDEALS.

OUR subject this morning is Illusions and Ideals, and I shall speak of it, as you can readily understand, of necessity, under those special limitations which connect it with this place and these services.

In a thoughtful volume which I laid down the other day, there occurs a conversation between two friends, provoked by that very natural enthusiasm which one of them had expressed, in regard to the advantages of living in this generation with the larger light and knowledge and opportunity which have come especially to Christian people, through the manifold gains of this nineteenth century.

In answer to this his companion replies that he wishes he could join with his friend in that expression of enthusiasm, but is constrained to confess that he cannot. "Looking back from to-day," he says in substance, "there are ages which we call the Dark Ages, and which most of us have been taught to despise. They were ages of more imperfect knowledge, and of abundant superstition, and they were, as a result of that superstition, sometimes ages of great cruelty and wrong. But, on the other hand, they were ages of a simpler and more childlike faith. They were ages when, if you choose, men had illusions in abundance, but were made happy by them; when Heaven was nearer, when the earth was more interesting just because it was more mysterious, and when life, girt about though

it was by what we call a thousand fables, was somehow a more fascinating, just because a more unintelligible thing.

“We have torn away the mask to-day ; we have shattered the illusions of the past. Knowledge, with its insatiable curiosity, has dispelled a great many of our dreams. The traditions, the superstitions, as we call them, of our ancestors, have vanished—are we happier for their loss? *Is* it a gain to know so much? Is it a real progress, at any rate in peace of mind, to have destroyed these earlier illusions? Was not the childlike state, in its comparative innocence of evil, in its simple and confiding faith, on the whole a more blessed, more peaceful and joyous state than that to which we have come to-day?”

I. Now I think we can sympathize with that feeling, even though we may be ever so enthusiastic concerning our own times. No one who has passed the threshold of youthful life is ignorant of painful experience—with most of us, alas, to be deepened as life goes along—of the decay of earlier illusions. If we go no farther afield than ourselves, what illusions have been shattered, to us who have come to the burden and heat of the day, concerning our own character, hopes, and powers! There was a time when we parted the portal and looked out at the world, kindled by some warm enthusiasm, or on fire with some great truth which had broken upon us for the first time, in the confidence that the tasks to which some clarion voice called us were the tasks for which we were abundantly

adapted, and into which we had only to throw ourselves, to achieve certain victory.

We know better than that now. If no other illusion has been shattered, I venture to affirm, that to most of those to whom I speak this morning, that illusion is at best a fading memory. We have learned that, whatever our courage, our daring, our profound faith in our own powers to achieve results, *results are not in our keeping*; that the best enthusiasm, the finest fervor, may hurl itself against some old evil, may cry aloud in the market-place in most indignant protest, may lift up its hand and voice against some monstrous wrong, and may do it in vain. It is not enough that we are persuaded of our own powers and of the merit of the cause in which we are enlisted to make

us victorious. We have learned that such a faith in ourselves is an illusion.

And then, again, take that other phase of life, which consists not in achievement, but in resistance. Time was, when we were younger, more inexperienced, less familiar with the enormous power of evil, less set, it may be, in the place where the hot fires of temptation burnt upon us with most resolute force ; when the fall or the error or the misstep of another, seemed to us not only incredible but shameful ; when we said to ourselves, and said it with an honest confidence : " If I had been there, and if that temptation had challenged me, if that hot flush of passion had flamed up in my breast, I know I could have resisted it. I know how the evil thing would have been spurned ; I know that I would have

been strong enough to come off a conqueror."

Our feet have slipped since then. The temptation has come and conquered us once and again. It may have been some subtle habit that, little by little, has encroached upon us, until day by day it has been a hard fight not to yield ourselves wholly to the mastery of it; some sin, that seems no greater than the sin of the tongue, like detraction; but as the years have gone on, we have learned this lesson, that our own powers of resistance are not sufficient for all the emergencies of life, and that the strength in us, equal, as we thought, to cope with any temptation, is, after all, too often an illusory strength.

And then, yet again, in regard to our spiritual perceptions of God, our rela-

tion to Him and the world that is unseen. Ah! once there was a time, when in fulfilment of those words of Wordsworth, that "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," the realm of the unseen seemed somehow more close to our childish dreams than the realm that is seen. How is it to-day? Has the unseen grown closer or more remote? Is the realm of the spiritual more real or unreal? Is not that faith which once seemed so clear and so firm, in danger its very self, sometimes, of becoming to us an illusion of our childhood, and the things which seemed to hold us fast, in danger of slipping wholly out of our grasp? Our very power of spiritual perception, which once appeared so vivid, is it not, in one word, in danger of perishing utterly?

II. And again. When we turn from

ourselves to our work, how is it there? You can remember, I fancy, every one of you, the time when you were first attracted to some interest or opportunity, and how it presented itself to you as the one exclusive claim of paramount importance in all the world. What a cause it was—whether of the ignorant, or the needy, or the outcast—was there any other work like it? Above all, was there any plan like that in which you yourself had become enlisted for doing this work? Was there not here at last the panacea that was to redeem the disorders of society, and uplift the fallen ones, and transform this old world of ours into a new Eden?

If you have gone a great way in the work you are doing, you have outgrown that illusion. You have found out, that, however opportune and ur-

gent that work may be, it is but a small part, after all, of that manifold and many-sided service, by which the world in bondage of sin is to be redeemed back again to the service of Jesus Christ. You have found out that your own methods are, after all, but very imperfect; in one word, that your pet scheme for the regeneration of the race is largely an illusion.

And still more, perhaps, when you turn to the objects of it. The little children you wanted to save, the poor and destitute you wanted to house better, the needy you wanted to relieve—ah, how engaging they were when they first came to your notice! How real seemed the need, how genuine the humility that presented itself in the persons of these deserving ones! And then, one day, there comes an insincer-

ity, and you find out that those whom you have been helping are not ingenuous in their poverty; it may be that their poverty is not real, it may be that it is poverty allied to vice, and that everything you are doing to ennoble only conspires to degrade and pauperize; in a word, that these your heroes and heroines of the realm of the poor are so many fantastic illusions, whose virtues are largely the creation of your own imagination.

And so of the rewards of our work. There was a time when that work itself was to us the keenest pleasure. In the beginning of it, in the first freshness of the new love, you can remember how you said to yourself, "Can anybody tire of this service? What a charm there is about it, what a reward in the very doing it! Only give me

strength and courage, and my life will find its happiness in going in and out on such errands, and spending and being spent for Christ and His service."

Said James Hinton, "Somebody asked me what I wanted to go and live in White Chapel for, and whether it was because I thought the nineteenth century needed a new illustration of martyrdom. I could not make them understand that those walks I took every afternoon in White Chapel, and the pleasure of sending my pictures to be exhibited among the most degraded people—that all this was itself a joy so keen and real, that I sometimes arraigned myself for the indulgence of what was a natural taste in me, and which found in their gratitude to whom I ministered, my best reward." God forbid that we should not find the same

pleasure in our work. But, oh, if it would only last ! What a bright illusion vanishes, when we find out one day that the work once so sweet and gracious is so no longer ; when the consciousness of drudgery comes, and when that confident belief which was itself the most inspiring illusion of all—that in the service we should find not only the privilege of doing Christ's work, but a daily joy in doing it—is no longer true ; when we take up our task with a supreme sense of its weariness, and lay it down when the day is done, almost with a sense of thankfulness.

III. But all this, I think, we could endure, if it were not for the destruction of those other illusions, which have so much to do with the happiness of most of us, in any service or any life in this world—our illusions concerning

our fellow-workers. Here is somebody who has kindled our whole interest into a flame. Here is a book which we read, which brings to us the life and work of some 'one we long to know. Here is a personality which somehow or other has come to bear upon our own need, whose call has awakened us out of the lethargy of our old indifference and sent us forth to do God's service, with the feeling that just so long as we can watch that other and be kindled by the tone of her voice, and quickened by the inspiration of her leadership, we can go on without weariness and without discouragement. And then, one day, we come near and find that the fine gold is somehow dimmed. One day, this friend of ours is cold to us or pre-occupied, or what is worse still, seems selfish. We discover how along with

these graces and powers of leadership and of inspiration, there is a large human element—it may be the love of adulation, or of power, it may be self-will, or self-seeking. No matter. As we detect the selfish motive, the dross among the gold, as we find that the rare sweetness can be clouded by fretfulness or impatience; that the character does not always ring quite true, that our hero, though his face be of gold, has hands of brass and it may be feet of iron, what a shock comes to us then! How it seems as if not only our hero, our leader, our guide, were somehow unreal, or of the earth, *but as if there could be nothing quite real, nothing in all the world that was not illusory*, and as if, instead of holding fast to these inspirations which have come to us from contact with those whom we

believed noble and unselfish, we must fling them all away.

In the life of one of the most eminent servants of God, we find an answer to that state of mind, I think at once conclusive and complete. A great Apostle, speaking of his earlier ministry and his child-life, says of himself: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." The child-life is the life of illusion; the child-life is the life of half-lights, of imperfect knowledge, of imagination, supplying the place of that discrimination and that intelligent perception, which is the gift not of childhood, but of manhood and womanhood.

Would we have it different? Nay, could it be otherwise, even if we wished

it? As with the infant, the half-light is all that its childish eye can bear, so with you and me. Led on by its imperfect rays to seek a clearer vision, it must needs be that that clearer vision, when it comes, shall often pain and surprise us. But it need not be the surrender of our faith in goodness that shall come to pass, because of the dissipation of our illusions—nay, it ought not to be—but only the surrender of our idols, the emancipation from that earlier and half-pagan hero-worship which put a human being on the throne of the Divine, and then would fain bow down and worship it. Surely any experience of disillusion is better than that, no matter what it costs; and when we see how such a process of disillusion, as in the case of the child, brings us closer to that which is the Eternally True, we

112 ILLUSIONS AND IDEALS.

may well hail it as a blessing in disguise. As it was with the Apostle, so it must be unto you and me.

First, there is the child-sight, imperfect, cloudy, ignorant, erecting its heroes into gods and goddesses, kindling itself into enthusiasm with its half-knowledge and half-imagination, and then the time comes when the knowledge is more perfect, and the illusion is revealed in its true character, and we discover how false were a great many of our perceptions of life and character and of our own work. But in such a crisis let us not mistake. What are we to do? We are not to throw away our faith with our illusions, and fold our hands in despair, and cry out that all is false; but we are to remember that because, when we are children, we see as children, and understand as chil-

dren, for that very reason when we come to manhood and womanhood, we are to put away childish things. We are to accept, in other words, the trial, the probation, of half-knowledge ; and then we are to recognize that the shattering of our earlier illusions is but a stepping-stone first to a nobler and truer vision of service, and so to a loftier ideal of excellence in the doing of it. And just here let me again commend to your attention the story of Sister Dora. There are some lives of women who have given themselves to Christ and His service which have the more value just because they do not carefully exclude from their pages any honest delineation of those infirmities of character, which form a considerable part of the noblest natures. And, in the case of Dora Patterson, the power

and the helpfulness—I speak at any rate for myself—of that book has largely been that it is a story of a woman of infirmities of character, with a hasty temper, with an intense love of power, with a very strong hunger for admiration for which confessedly again and again she did things, who, nevertheless, in the midst of this dross mixed with the gold, carried all the way so high a purpose, ending a noble life at last so sweetly and serenely under the discipline of pain, that to have known her, environed by her infirmities, and yet mastering them at last, is infinitely more helpful and inspiring than to have seen her in that half-light and mediæval coloring which would have made of her a saint and not a woman.

No, we are to remember that the things that are earthly must needs par-

take of the earth. We long, oftentimes, for an example, a leader, a personal friend and companion, who shall be so free from human infirmities that nowhere, at any point, is there anything to shatter our illusion and discourage our idolatry. It is just here that we must distinguish between an illusion and an ideal. There is an ideal excellence, but it is an ideal excellence just because, under the conditions in which you and I live and work to-day, it must of necessity be impossible for it to be a merely human excellence. We would fain bring our ideals down here into the work-day world, and make them a part of our common life, and get our inspiration by that sense of touch and sight and hearing, which comes from holding on to the hand of an earthly friend. Do you not realize that the moment you

bring them down into this work-day world, they must needs partake of its infirmities and shortcomings, and that, just in so far as they are merely human, they must live and err under merely human conditions?

No! The longing in itself is right and noble, but it is given to lift our hearts, no matter by what painful struggle, from earthly idols to the One Ideal that can never fail, and will never disappoint us.

And what is this but to state in other language that which Jesus Himself stated on the morning of the Resurrection when she who had known Him in the flesh, and longed to cling to Him as her ideal in the flesh, came and flung herself upon His feet, to be bidden back with those lofty words: "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to

My Father." She *was* to touch Him again, not with the hand of flesh, but with the hand of faith, and so she was, by that upper life, lifted far above her own, to be drawn out of this lower life, to let go the illusions of her ignorant past, and to see in them the prophecy of that Divine Ideal, which was to be hereafter her highest inspiration and her truest strength. Remember just here those words in the Collect for Ascension-Day: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the Heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell." You have lost your earlier illusions. Do not bemoan them. Step by step, as you have gone on in your work, one and another of those earlier

faiths in your work, in your opportunities, in yourself, in your fellows, it may be, have been shattered and crumbled. Remember that all these fragments, these broken lights of virtue of which you get a glimpse here in one character and there in another, but which are united in perfect symmetry and completeness in no human life—that these exist in order that you may lift your aspirations above them to that Ideal Excellence that once walked the earth awhile, incarnated in Jesus Christ, risen and ascended now to His Father and your Father, who is in Heaven, and real to you to-day, only as you “thither ascend in mind and in heart, and with Him continually dwell.” And so, let these vanishing images of our earlier illusions be not the discouragements to an earnest service, but the ladder by

which we climb up to it. Out of the ignorance, out of the misapprehensions of your past, try to come a little closer to Him, who is the one perfect Ideal of excellence—Jesus Christ.

When she was ministering at Walsall in a hospital, one day, a poor miner over whom she bent, said to Dora Patterson, "I want, Sister Dora, to make a confession to you." "Make it then," she said, with her imperious abruptness, "make it." Even then, as she bent above him, her head was bound up because of a wound she had received from a stone thrown by some unseen hand, when returning from a visit among the poor. "I was the man," he said, "who threw that stone; I cannot endure not to tell you of it, when I see you ministering thus tenderly to me." "My dear fellow," she said, "don't you suppose I

knew it? I have long ago gotten over my earlier illusion that the poor always love their helpers. God forbid that I should not serve you, because it has been shattered."

And so with you and me. God forbid that we should not serve Him in the image of any of His creatures, because our illusions have been shattered! Out of these vanishing dreams of the past, let us rather come closer into the presence of the One Excellence, and find it in our perfect, our sufficient Ideal.

WHOLENESS.

**An Address delivered in St. George's Church,
New York, Monday, March 15, 1886, at the Service
for Women engaged in Church work.**

WHOLENESS.

IN concluding the series of services of which this is the last, I shall depart from my usage hitherto on occasions like this, and say little, if anything, of your work. I want this morning to speak to you of yourselves, and in the sequence of the thought suggested by the last theme that occupied our attention, to speak to you of yourselves as instruments to be used for the work of God in the world. Indeed, I think that if you will reflect a moment, you will recognize how little is any such conception of our *work* as is expressed by the word "wholeness" possible to us here and to-day.

“Wholeness”—what do we mean by the word? Certainly we mean something that is unlike fragmentariness or partialness; and yet, what view of our work is possible to us without recognizing the characteristic of fragmentariness? Take for example, the work which the Church is doing in a great city like this. We may well, in this inspiring presence, take note of that which is being done here, where an old, and so to speak, largely disused shell has been made, under a new touch, to be filled with life and potent with influences for good to a degree for which we are all equally glad and thankful. How manifold it is in its activities! How untiring the zeal and energy of him to whose hospitality we are indebted for our service this morning, and of those associated with him! And yet the first thing the rec-

tor of this church would say to you, if standing in my place, would be, after all, to own that any such work as this, large and many-sided as it is, with reference to the needs of a community so vast as ours, can only be fragmentary and partial. Think of the twelve or thirteen hundred thousand people who live in New York, and then consider how imperfectly at best, the Church, whose children we are, can reach and rescue them. We must content ourselves—it is a part of the condition of things under which we are working—to do our little segment of work, to do it with all our hearts, and then to confess that it is but fragmentary after all.

On the other hand, when we come to turn from the work we are doing to the workers, what is it, which, as we read the New Testament in the record of

those marvellous recreations of power and restorations of faculty which are characteristics of the miracles of Christ, is more clearly indicated than this, that howsoever fragmentary our work may be, we ourselves were not meant to be fragments, but each one of us a whole?

It is just here that the Christian religion, standing over against ancient art, has so large a significance. You remember those figures of women called caryatides, which are a frequent feature of antique architecture, and which are introduced often in connection with some vast façade instead of columns, to support entablatures. That was the conception of art, because, first of all, it was the conception of pagan humanity. There was a widely-prevailing view of human beings which regarded them as no more nor better than beasts

of burden, useful so far as they had a pair of strong shoulders, and under certain pressure could stand up and resist and bear, and that was all. But the moment we come into the presence of Christ and the work He does in the world, we see how entirely His conception of human nature contradicts that; how from the beginning to the end of His earthly ministry, where there is imperfectness, where there is absence of faculty, where there is primitive denial of power, as in the blind man's case, or in the case of the deaf and dumb, He restores it. Surely in the case of such restorations, there is enormous significance in that side of them which reveals Christ's work as making human nature whole and human powers symmetrical, as denying the doctrine that a man or woman is to be content with

certain partial powers, leaving others equally undeveloped and barren. We have a phrase when we speak of people who are incomplete, which, just here, is most expressive. Here is some one full of zeal and energy in his calling, absorbed in his daily business with an ardor so keen that nothing can discourage it. How the man holds on to one purpose, and pushes himself and all his powers in one direction! But touch him on the side of humanity, appeal to those instincts which ought to be in him to love his fellow-man, or try and kindle in him some noble aspiration for a life above the seen, and you knock at a door which is closed. Now, I say, we have a phrase in regard to such people which is singularly descriptive. We say of a man like that, "he is but half a man," something in him has been left

out. That which makes completeness, that which makes symmetry in character, is wanting; and in describing one thus as half a man, we describe him truly.

I. And so it belongs to us, in connection with the topic I have suggested for our reflection, to ask ourselves what that is in personal character which makes what we call *wholeness* or completeness. And in undertaking to answer that question this morning, I shall not disdain to begin very low down. When I touch your hand, when I hear the sound of your voice, I come in contact, in the one case or the other, with something which is the only means which you have of translating to me that which is in your thought. In other words, it is through those physical powers and endowments which God has

given to us, that we make ourselves intelligible to other people. Shut them all up, and one might be a genius in his intellectual gifts, but would be powerless to influence his fellow-men. It is through this wonderful organism which includes the senses and the sense powers, that the intellect and the spirit of man reveals itself to its brother man, and it is the vigor and wholeness of this physical organization which alone makes greatly possible the errands and the services of mercy on which God calls us to run.

What now is just here the danger especially of the sex to which I speak this morning? I think it is a twofold danger, and, as such, almost universal. On the one hand, if a woman at the outset of life has natural gifts and charms, that perilous endowment which

we call beauty, then there is a strong temptation to minister to the physical side of her nature, not merely to pamper herself by indulgence, but to consider those things that contribute to the adornment of the body, and relate to the mere flesh and what may be called mere fleshly potency. There is something appalling, when one remembers the errands to be done in the world by woman, in the thought of the time that some women spend on something no better than the beautification of their persons, letting the mere decoration of the body engross so large a thought and absorb so much of their time, that when the day is done, and the neglected duty that called them at the beginning of it stands over against them with admonitory mien, they are constrained to remember that they have failed because

of some prettiness of toilet trifling, or some thoughtless folly, which ate into the purpose and finally ate up the day.

And then again, on the other hand, there is that other danger, and there is urgent reason for speaking of it, which comes to women exempt from the temptation to which I have already referred, who, because they may not be richly endowed with physical gifts, despise the care of the body. We ought surely to be emancipated in this century, after the dark pages in the Church's history which are behind us, from the follies, which, in the name of Religion, men and women have committed in the neglect and torture of their own bodies; and equally emancipated from the folly of supposing that godliness consists in debility or dyspepsia. Is it not a mechanism of God's own handiwork

that we are neglecting? It is a cruel wrong to a gift of God, no less sacred than the gift of the intellect, even though not so high in its powers, if we abuse the body He has given us, by disesteeming its soundness or neglecting its welfare, when, by a simple care for the rudimentary principles of health, we might keep this physical instrument, whose powers for ministering are in proportion as it is in a healthy condition, well-tuned. The world is cursed all around to-day, just because men and women have been neglectful and indifferent in the care of their physical health. How the home has had its peace shattered and the day spoiled by some mean and bitter word—the fruit of some vicious heart or brain? No, but of some detestable mal-condition of the body, which could be cured if we

would only recognize the sacredness of the instrument God put in our power for His service.

Surely, between the two extremes of idolatry of the body and neglect of the body, there is a golden mean. It is possible not to make an idol of the body, but a complete instrument of service, to develop that lowest side of you if you please, but even so to make yourself more and more a whole woman by the way in which you respect the laws of health, and thus to reverence that which was made to be the temple of the Holy Ghost.

II. But again, you have an instrument infinitely finer than the body. There is something in you, that, as in old Latin phrase, says *intelligo* : I know, I perceive, I understand. There is something in you that forever differen-

tiates you from all the orders of beings below you, however men may try to make them like you by their training, and which only shows more and more that you are not a brute. Each one of you, if she has used her own mind even in the most imperfect way, has become conscious of this threefold fact: First of all, that she has powers of perception. The mind recognizes truth, discerns a fact; there is something in it which, like the hand, is prehensile, and that takes hold of that which appeals to its reason and its intelligence.

Next in order is that power of the mind which we call the power of comparison. The child begins to exercise it by a subtle intuition, as soon as it begins to think at all, and just as an infant learns the difference between great and small, so as we go on we are

meant to learn, by the exercise of this power of comparison, the distinction between great and little things, and also the distinction between things that are true and the things that are false.

And then, binding these other two powers, the perceptive and the comparative, together, there is what we call the reflective power, which, alas! in this age of ours, is the least exercised of all; the power, which wants to be disciplined, and developed, and which, in connection with the highest themes, bids us away out of the hurried thoroughfares of life, to be still, and sit for a little while with the busy hands and feet in perfect repose. This is our mind. The power that perceives, the power that compares, and the reflective power that crowns them all with the act of meditation, and so seeks, as Ba-

con says, to know a thing by "thinking through it"—the highest dignity I can conceive of the intellectual nature.

Now what is the characteristic of the age in which we live, as regards its mental attitude? It is an age of very slender and shifting beliefs, an age in which the opinions of yesterday in no individual case, as a rule, are sure to be the opinions of to-morrow. It is an age in which we are wont to find people moved out of their old moorings, and there are more people, I believe, than confess it even into the ears of their most intimate friends, who have been moved away from all positive beliefs whatever. But if this is so, I charge such a condition of things, wherever it is found, quite as largely as upon any other influence, upon the influence of what I would call intellectual laziness, a curse,

I think, of our generation, greater in proportion than in any that has preceded it, certainly for two hundred years. We turn back and think of our fathers and of the narrowness of their faith ; yes, it may have been narrow, but what a hold they had upon the truth they believed, what a power it was in their daily life, just because they had gotten that strong grip upon it, which comes, and can only come, from the exercise of the threefold intellectual power, which God has given to every one of us.

How many of us now, in this generation, can say that our beliefs are matters of strong conviction, that our opinions, whether in regard to letters, or art, or religion, are things which we have reached by "thinking unto them" ? Rather, how many of us

have accepted these things by tradition? Undoubtedly, we may not disesteem traditions, but the degradation of our intellectual condition in the nineteenth century, as I regard it, is this, that the traditions on whose authority we hold things, are so often so contemptible as compared with the traditions that bound our ancestors. Though it is true that many of them were only creatures of traditions, their traditions had the dignity of antiquity, and came trailing down through the glory of past ages, ennobled as being the beliefs and opinions of men and women who had suffered and died for their faith.

But ours—where did we get them, and how noble and how saintly, and how worthy of the position of leadership, have been the men and women in their thought and lives from whom we

often derive them? Believe me, we could do no better service to our own souls than over against this one word, wholeness, to strive for intellectual completeness, to ask, on what grounds do I hold truth? and to seek to discipline and call into action the power in us that thinks, and so develop a more clear understanding, whether of the truths of nature or of revelation, by the exercise of the powers God has given us, wherewith to take hold of them.

III. And then, finally, wholeness means supremely the exercise and the development of the spiritual faculty, or what I would call, as the Bishop of Central New York, in a very remarkable sermon, which I would that I might put in the hands of every one of you, described, some years ago, as the "Faith Faculty."

In the Gospel, according to St. Luke, there is a description of the healing of the ten lepers by Christ, and the return of one of them, after he had been healed, to pay homage to his Healer. In that case, when Christ had cleansed the lepers, He bids them go show themselves to the priest and render the offering Moses has commanded. And then we read that "one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.

"And fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

"There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

“And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”

Whole—a profoundly significant word just here. The others had done what He bade them do, and they might have replied in answer to Christ's criticism, that He Himself had told them to go and show themselves to the priest, though He had not indeed forbade them to thank Him. But the significance of His word to this one Samaritan lies, if I read it aright, in this, that while the others had got what they wanted and gone away in the joy of it—as so many of us do when we get what we want, forgetting the Giver in the gift—this one turned back to Christ, to pour out his heart in gratitude to God. And then what happened?

Have you ever asked yourselves that

question? Ah! I think it was, that, as he looked up into that Divine countenance and heard the tones of that incomparable voice, there smote upon his soul for the first time the Vision of the Divine! Into his heart there broke at last the sense of God, and so he flings himself at Jesus' feet—in gratitude? Yes, but most of all in adoration. And that therefore is what Christ meant by saying his faith had made him *whole*. He was a clean man before, cleansed of his leprosy, but when at last there woke in his breast that consciousness of the Divine, when at last he saw his Lord and owned Him, when the Faith Faculty, in other words, was born out of impotence into life, then, he became a whole man; not half a man, with his physical powers and his intellectual powers alive, but dead on the Godward

side, but a whole man at last, because his "*faith* had made him whole."

Blessed be God for such a word as that to us who are here to-day. It is not wholly an age of indifference in which you and I live, it is not an age of want of reading or culture, or want of talk about religious things—I sometimes think there is too much of this in the pulpit and out of it—but it is an age of unfaith, because, while we live so largely upon traditions—whether of the neighbor who lives next door or the prophet who spoke a hundred years ago, it does n't make the least difference—what we believe and affirm is second-hand; and the Faith Faculty is a thing to a great many people, so far as its loftiest exercise is concerned, all but unknown.

We believe "the belief"—the Creed.

Is not that faith? we ask. Rather I maintain, faith is *vision*, the unsealing of the spiritual eye-sight, that power in you and me which turns the dome of brass into the open door of Heaven, and which makes us to behold here in this work-a-day world the form of Him who walks among the golden candlesticks, and bends above all His workers with inexhaustible sympathy and love.

That is the faculty which in this age we need most of all to have awakened, and in what may be called a caricature of it in our time, I seem to see a kind of protestantism of faith, which may well be of significance to you and me. We are many of us much pained by the extravagance of that religious phase of the hour, which concerns itself with what are called Faith Cures, and God knows nobody has less disposition to

disesteem human agencies in connection with the work of healing than I, or to recognize the fact that in God's work to-day for sickness and misery in the world, he expects His children, their hands and eyes and feet and minds, to be, with other natural gifts, instruments of working His cures among men. But when, in accordance with the spirit of an age that believes so much in the seen and so little in the unseen, men exalt physical remedies into the place of the Divine Providence, when they disesteem prayer so largely in the case of sickness and suffering as to disregard it altogether, when it is hard in so many cases, to get people, in connection with the miseries of this life, to place their dependence on the help and love of a Heavenly Father, I don't wonder that there rises up a sect, if you choose to

call it so, which, with its inevitable reaction against this state of things, believes in being cured solely by the exercise of faith. It is a modern phase of Protestantism, which has its profound significance and which we may not disregard.

For, all the way along, work as we will, command as we may the skill of the ablest physician, what we do from beginning to end is conditioned upon what God does. And so, whether we are ministering to the body or the soul, whether our work lies among ill-ventilated homes, or in the midst of ignorance and prejudice and rebellion against the law of God, let us remember that the thing which is to make you complete women, not fragments, but *whole* for Christ and His service, is most of all the Faith Faculty, that sees your Lord,

that hears His voice, and that holds His hand. Says the Apostle, "Ye are complete *in Him*." Expressive word! This is the *whole* womanhood that we want.

In taking leave of you, with thankfulness for the privilege of having met you for these past few months, I could offer no better prayer for you or the work you are doing for your Master, than that, in that work, you may each one of you illustrate a whole womanhood, rounded and complete and symmetrical, healthy in body, acute and vigorous in mind, but above all, upward-looking and expectant in Faith, trusting in the Leader who leads you, confident, because of the strength which He alone can give.

May He go with you as we part to-day. May He follow you in all the

ministries and services that wait before you, and so make each one of you complete in Him, "Who is the head of all principality and *power*."

